Tabebuia heptaphylla
Pink Trumpet Tree¹

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

INTRODUCTION

Pink Trumpet Tree produces a wonderful specimen tree, reaching a height of 50 feet and is covered with terminal panicles of pink to rose-purple, two-inch-wide, showy blossoms in spring (Fig. 1). There are few, if any, other flowering trees which can match the beauty of this tree in bloom! Flowers stand out nicely because there are no leaves on the tree during flowering. They contrast nicely against the light grey bark. The palmately compound leaves bear five leaflets, each about two-and-one-half inches long.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: Tabebuia heptaphylla  
Pronunciation: tab-eh-BOO-yuh hep-tuh-FILL-uh  
Common name(s): Pink Trumpet Tree  
Family: Bignoniaceae  
USDA hardiness zones: 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)  
Origin: not native to North America  
Uses: large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; shade tree; specimen; residential street tree  
Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

DESCRIPTION

Height: 40 to 50 feet  
Spread: 35 to 50 feet  
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms  
Crown shape: round; vase shape  
Crown density: moderate  
Growth rate: fast  
Texture: medium  

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)  
Leaf type: palmately compound  
Leaflet margin: entire; undulate  
Leaflet shape: elliptic (oval); oblong  
Leaflet venation: pinnate

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Leaf type and persistence: deciduous; semievergreen
Leaflet blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower
Flower color: pink
Flower characteristics: spring flowering; very showy

Fruit
Fruit shape: elongated; pod
Fruit length: 6 to 12 inches; 3 to 6 inches
Fruit covering: dry or hard
Fruit color: brown
Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; no significant litter problem; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: grow mostly upright and will not droop; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns
Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: brown
Current year twig thickness: medium

Culture
Light requirement: tree grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; alkaline; well-drained
Drought tolerance: high

Other
Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time
Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Pink Trumpet Tree would make a nice tree for planting along a boulevard or residential street where there is plenty of soil space for root development. Prune major limbs so they remain about one-half the diameter of the trunk so they remain well secured to the trunk. This is a tree you will want to keep around, once you see it in flower.

Pink Trumpet Tree should be grown in full sun or partial shade on rich, well-drained soil.

Propagation is by seed, cuttings, or layering. Trees flower at an early age.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.